

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for use in a motor vehicle having a roof system, said motor vehicle further having a body with a passenger compartment and a trunk space, said apparatus comprising:

5 a roof system comprising any one of a rigid panel hardtop,

a retractable hardtop moveable from an extended position disposed above said passenger compartment to a retracted position, or a soft convertible top movable from an extended position disposed above said passenger compartment to a retracted position, wherein any one of said rigid panel hardtop, retractable hardtop or convertible soft top includes an attachment bracket

10 a transverse support beam having a first end and a second end, said support beam carrying any one of said rigid panel top, said retractable hardtop or said soft convertible top, wherein said first end and said second end include universal adapter brackets,

15 wherein said universal adapter brackets are connected to said attachment brackets and to the vehicle body.

20 2. The apparatus of claim 1 including a dual hinged rear deck lid covering said trunk space wherein said rear deck lid is capable of pivoting to allow retraction of any one of said retractable hardtop or said soft convertible top into said trunk space for storage.

25 3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said universal adapter brackets comprise metal plates containing a series of holes or slots or features that align with said first end and said second end of said transverse beam.

4. The universal adapter brackets of claim 1 wherein said brackets are attached to said vehicle body by any one of welding, riveting, bolting or adhesive attachment.

30 5. An apparatus for use in a motor vehicle having a roof system, said motor vehicle further having a body with a passenger compartment and a trunk space, said apparatus comprising:

a roof system comprising any one of a rigid panel hardtop,

a retractable hardtop moveable from an extended position disposed above said passenger compartment to a retracted position, or a soft convertible top movable from an extended position disposed above said passenger compartment to a retracted position,

wherein any one of said rigid panel hardtop, retractable hardtop or convertible soft top includes an attachment bracket

a transverse support beam having a first end and a second end, said support beam carrying any one of said rigid panel top, said retractable hardtop or said soft convertible top,

5 wherein said first end and said second end include universal adapter brackets,

wherein said universal adapter brackets are connected to said attachment brackets.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said universal adapter brackets comprise metal plates containing a series of holes or slots or features that align with said first end and
10 said second end of said transverse beam.

7. The universal adapter brackets of claim 5 wherein said brackets are attached to said vehicle body by any one of welding, riveting, bolting or adhesive attachment.

15 8. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said transverse support beam is connected to the vehicle body.

9. A motor vehicle having a roof system, said motor vehicle further having a passenger compartment and a trunk space, said motor vehicle comprising:

20 a single body capable of accepting a roof system comprising any one of a rigid panel hardtop, a retractable hardtop or a soft convertible top, and

universal adapter brackets attached to said body to locate and attach said any one of said rigid panel hardtop, said retractable hardtop or said soft convertible top roof system.

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10. A motor vehicle roof system for use in an automotive vehicle having a passenger compartment and a storage compartment, said roof system comprising:

a transverse support beam structure having a first end and a second end,

one of (i) a rigid panel roof structure fastened to said vehicle or (ii) a retractable

30 hardtop structure said retractable hardtop structure comprising a series of hingedly or slidably engaged panels, said retractable hardtop being movable between an extended position covering the passenger compartment and a retracted position for storage in said storage compartment, or (iii) a soft convertible top structure comprising a fabric covering and folding

mechanism, said soft convertible top being movable between an extended position covering said passenger compartment and a retracted position for storage in said storage compartment,

wherein said transverse beam structure connects to one of said rigid panel roof, retractable hardtop or soft convertible top to provide for assembly of one of said rigid panel
5 roof, retractable hardtop or soft convertible top upon said beam,

wherein said transverse support structure provides a handling and transport aid for said roof system, and

wherein said transverse support provides attachment at said first end and said second end within said vehicle.

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11. The transverse support of claim 10, wherein said transverse support provides structural support to the vehicle.

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12. The transverse support of claim 10, wherein said transverse support includes a power unit for extending and retracting said retractable hardtop or said soft convertible top.

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13. An apparatus for storing a retractable roof system for a vehicle having a trunk and a passenger compartment, said apparatus comprising:

a trunk lid having a front edge and a rear edge,

a pivot mechanism located near said trunk lid rear edge to allow said trunk lid front edge to pivot from a closed position to an extended position wherein said retractable roof system can be retracted from an open position covering the passenger compartment of a vehicle to a retracted position in said trunk, and

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a pivot mechanism located near said trunk lid front edge to allow said trunk lid to pivot around said front edge from a closed position to an open position to allow access to said trunk.

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14. A method of installing a roof system on a motor vehicle body comprising the steps of;

providing a common vehicle body having dimensional registration points, selecting a roof system to be installed on said body, wherein said roof system comprises one of a rigid hardtop, a retractable hardtop or a soft convertible top, wherein said roof system includes attachment brackets with mating features,

providing adapter brackets wherein said adapter brackets contain mating features that correspond to mating features in said attachment brackets,

providing a spider gage, wherein said spider gage is located in said vehicle via said dimensional registration points, wherein said spider gage includes said adapter brackets,

5 locating said adapter brackets mounted on said spider gage to said vehicle body,

attaching said adapter brackets to said vehicle body,

removing said spider gage,

installing one of said rigid hardtop, retractable hardtop or soft convertible top on to said adapter brackets in said vehicle body by matching the mating features in said adapter
10 brackets to the mating features in said attachment bracket,

attaching said selected roof said system to said vehicle body.